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September 23, 1980

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Secretary of State Edmund Muskie
State Department
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Secretary Muskie:

Neutrality and a hands-off, wait and watch posture regarding the fate of Korea's Kim Dae Jung simply plays into General Chon Too Hwan's strategy of using his life as barter for increased military aid and a softening of the Carter Administration position on human rights. The U.S. must take the initiative: threaten to freeze all military aid (spare parts, F-16 jets, etc.) and suspend negotiations on Export-Import loans. We must force General Chon to react to us, rather than being forced to react to him, and allowing him to pose as merciful in a cynical ploy to milk us of more support.

I am enclosing an Amnesty International bulletin concerning the circumstances of Kim's trial.

Very truly yours,

Walter Wink

Dr. Walter Wink
Professor of Biblical Interpretation

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1980

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SAYS TRIAL OF KIM DAE-JUNG AND 23 OTHERS FAILED TO MEET INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS OF FAIRNESS

Amnesty International said today (Wednesday, September 17, 1980) that it was appalled by the death sentence passed by a South Korean military court on opposition leader Kim Dae-Jung after a trial that failed to meet internationally recognized standards of fairness.

The international human rights organization said Kim and 23 co-defendants, who received prison sentences, were not permitted to present a proper defense and there was evidence that they were threatened and ill-treated during pre-trial detention.

Kim was held incommunicado for three months after his arrest on May 17. He later told the court that he had been questioned for up to 15 hours a day in an underground room during the first two months of his detention, sometimes stripped of his clothes. Another defendant, Dr. Lee Moon-Young, told the court he was severely beaten during interrogation.

A number of lawyers who had taken human rights cases in the past were taken into custody by the authorities during this time, and some were forced to promise to give up their practices, according to reports reaching Amnesty International. The result was that the families of Kim and other defendants were unable to retain a lawyer of their choice.

Kim met his government-appointed lawyers for the first time on August 13 -- the day before the trial began -- the reports to Amnesty International said. He and the other defendants were not allowed to call defense witnesses.

Before the trial began, government-controlled news media publicized detailed accusations against the defendants of conspiracy and sedition, presenting as fact charges that had not been heard by any court at that time, and that have still not been heard by any court operating to the minimum requirements for fair trial, Amnesty International said.

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